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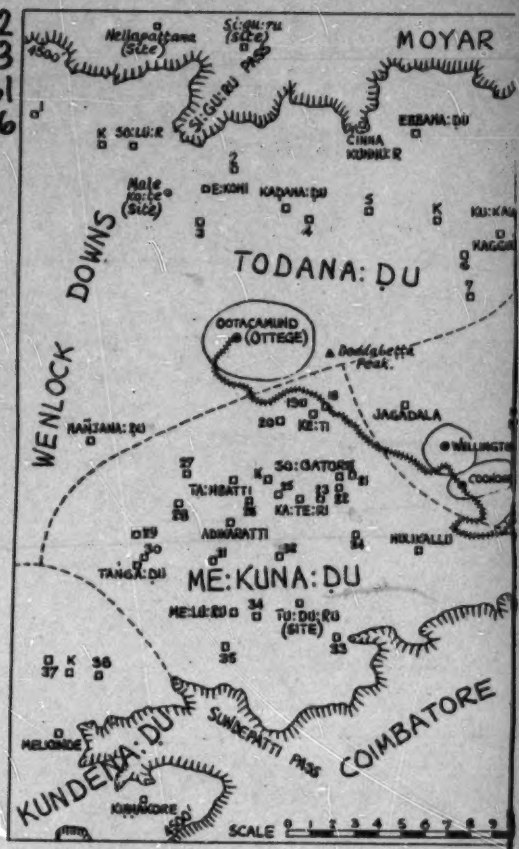
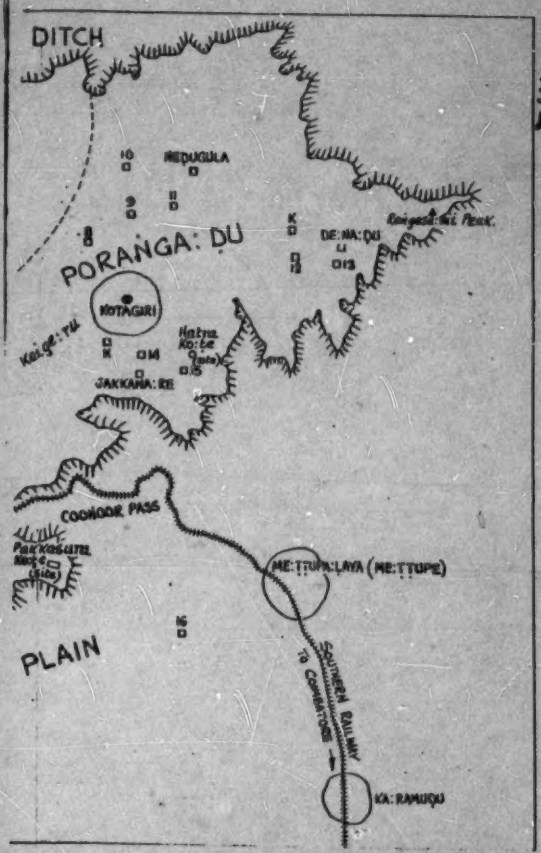
961
● 496



Map 2. The Nilgiri Plateau

Key: K Kota villages; 19 Aĉĉanakal; 28 Ba:kola; 10 Beragani; 37 Bikkaṭṭi; 15 Da:bakambe; 31 De:vaso:le (bazaar); 8 Dimbaṭṭi; 17 Eḍapaḷḷi; 6 Hajju:r; 30 Ha:lakore; 4 Ha:laṭṭi; 7 Honatale; 18 Hulla:ḍa; 2 Hullaṭi; 3 Kallaṭṭi; 9 Kappaṭṭi; 20 Kereha:da; 32 Koḍe:ru; 33 Kolekombe (bazaar); 29 Manihaṭṭi; 35 Manjakombe; 36 Manju:ru; 34 Me:lu:ru Hosa:ṭṭi; 26 Muttina:ḍu; 16

[p. 24]



102
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361
496

Nellitore; 21 Ne:rikambe; 27 Nunduwa: 1 O:ṇṭiw (Toda temple); 25 O:ranayi; 22 Sakkaiaṭṭi: 14 Sakkata; 24 Se:las (bazaar); 13 So:lu:rmaṭṭa (bazaar); 11 Suḷḷigu:du; 12 Tumbimale; 5 Tu:ne:ri; 23 Tu:raṭṭi: Villages that head COMMUNES are marked on the map by name; as also are modern TOWNS. Old *fortresses* are indicated in italics.

[p. 25]

AM50 Badaga AM50

attitudes sufficiently to become Christians now prompt people to alter other orientations not allied to religious values but rather to a secular government and its new ranking of employment and educational priorities. Such a change in orientation holds out the chance of upward mobility, but in that process conversion to Christianity has become an anachronistic mechanism.

NEW PATTERNS OF COMMUNICATION

The idea of communication embraces the physical facilities of road and rail transport, postal and telegraph services, as well as the mass media of radio, film and newspaper, and the channels for communication between individuals within a local setting. We shall review briefly how these have changed in recent decades.

Transportation

Steady improvements in transport have helped the production and sale of cash crops. In the last century all goods had to be carried up or down the Nilgiri escarpment by coolies, on horseback or in bullock carts.[10] Faced with such restrictions Badagas were unable to export produce to other parts of India (Grigg, 1880, 480). Then in 1899 a railway was completed from Coimbatore to Coonoor (a remarkable engineering achievement), and by 1908 it reached to Ootacamund. Its construction involved Badaga contractors and labourers, giving some their first experience of earning regular wages. When the 1914–1918 War began there was thus a quick means of exporting vegetables to all parts of India and even beyond.

During the years between the two wars trucks became common in the district, and roads were improved to accommodate them. A few Badagas who became middlemen bought lorries to improve their business. At the same time a bus service began, and in the years since World War II the network of bus routes has become so complex that there is now scarcely any Badaga village more than five kilometres from a bus route leading to a town. Seventy routes are travelled within the district, some by several competing companies.[11]

The Impact of Towns

The availability of such a profusion of buses has helped the

489 up or down the Nilgiri escarpment by hand, on horseback, or on bullock carts (Ward 1821: lxv). With such a restriction it was impossible for Badagas to export fresh vegetables to other parts of India, even had they been interested in doing so (Grigg 1880: 480).

In 1899 a railway was completed from Coimbatore to Coonoor, and by 1913 it reached as far as Cotacamund. Its construction involved Badaga contractors and Badaga laborers, giving to many their first experience of earning cash by working. When the 1914-1918 War began there was thus a quick and easy means of exporting fresh vegetables to all parts of India, and even beyond.

During the years between the two wars trucks became a common phenomenon in the District, and roads were improved to accommodate them. Some of the Badagas who became middlemen purchased trucks to improve their business.

At this time a local bus service also began. In the years since World War II the network of bus routes has become so complex that there is no longer a Badaga hamlet anywhere which is more than three miles from a bus route leading to one of the towns. 57 different routes are now traveled within the Nilgiris District, some by several competing companies.

The existence of buses in such profusion has helped the Badagas in more matters than marketing. They are now able to go to town frequently -- typically once a week -- and thus their children can attend high school and even college without having to lose their close contact with the home. Literacy and newspapers have spread, too, with the help of the easy transportation system. Literacy today is quite as high in the rural population of the Nilgiris as it is in Madras City, according to a survey which I conducted: in 1963, 77.8% of Badaga males, and 51.8% of females, were literate; whereas in 1961 69.6% of Madras City males, and 44.2%

Figure 1. Index maps

(1800-1963)

AM50 Badaga
Kota AM55
Kurumba AM56
Toda AM60
Madras Tribes AM63
Kasuya

6: Noble K-4,5 (1962-1963) 1989
(1800-1963)
AW50 Badaga AW50
Kota AW55
Kurumba AW56
Toda AW60
Madras Tribes AW63
Kasuva

631 plantations (Nambiar 1965: 58-60).

The Nilgiri urban centers are connected by a road network
491 (Figure 1). The main ghat (pass) roads converging on Ootacamund run from 1) Mettupalaiyam, in the Coimbatore District, through Coonoor, 2) Mettupalaiyam through Kotagiri, 3) Nilambur in Malabar, Kerala State, through Gudalur, and 4) Mysore, beyond the map in Mysore State, through Gudalur. The northern Sigur ghat road, which is a seldom used short cut running from the Mysore road to the Gudalur-Ootacamund road,
•496 is very steep in places. A narrow-guage railroad, on which central racks and cogs must be used for braking on the steepest gradients, runs from Mettupalaiyam to Coonoor and Ootacamund.

000 The three main industrial establishments in the Nilgiri District are the Government of India Cordite Factory near Coonoor, the Needle Industries (India) Ltd. farther up the road to Ootacamund, and the Hindustan Photo Films Manufacturing Company near Ootacamund. The first two establishments were founded during the period of English occupation, but construction of the third did not commence until 1962.

An important post-English, i.e., post-1947, development is the Kundah Hydroelectric Scheme, undertaken by the Madras Government and aided by Canadians under the Colombo Plan. In this scheme, probably completed by now, eight dams, several inter-reservoir tunnels, and five powerhouses were to be constructed mainly within the drainage basins of the Upper Bhavani and Kundah rivers in the southwestern Nilgiris. The Pykara Hydroelectric Scheme, begun by the English in 1929, was enlarged and completed recently. Three dammed reservoirs in the Pykara and Sandy Nala valleys west of Ootacamund, penstocks

6: Noble K-4,5 (1962-1963) 1989
(1800-1963)

AW50 Badaga AW50
Irula AW53
Kota AW55
Kurumba AW56
Toda AW60
Madras Tribes AW63
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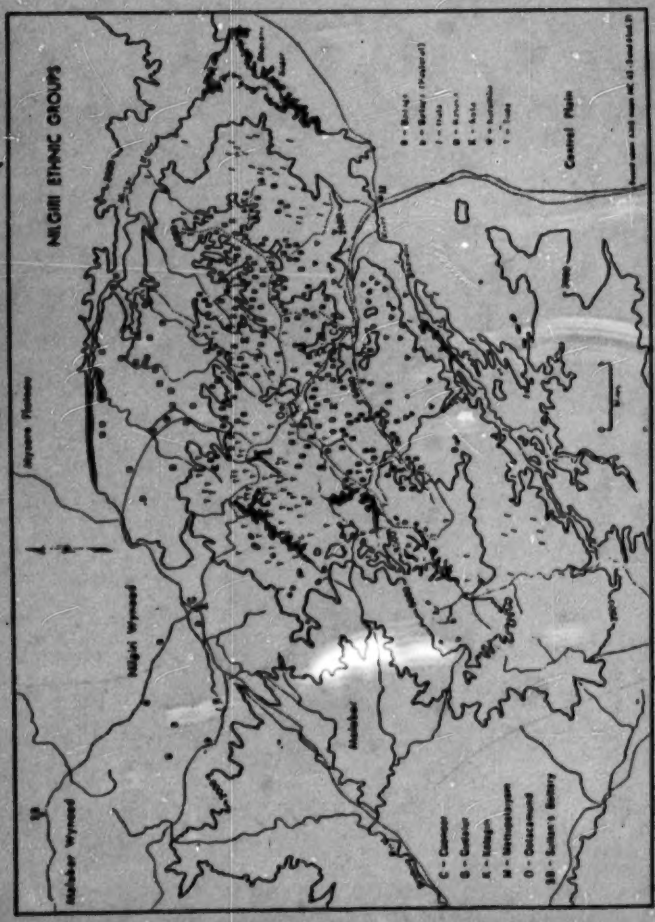

Figure 2.

One of these gorges, forming the Coonoor Pass, was used as the route for the only railroad and a main road leading to the upper Nilgiris. Above 6,000 feet terrain tends to be more gently sloped, but cannot be said to form a plateau. Above 7,000 feet there are rolling, hilly uplands interspersed with prominent peaks or ranges. Dodabetta (8,640 feet) in the central Nilgiris is the highest peak, but the majority of peaks over 8,000 feet in elevation (including Mukerti, 8,380 feet) are located in the western Kundah ranges. The summit hills and mountains are characteristically eroded into rounded features.

Water from most Nilgiri streams and rivers drains into the eastward flowing Bhavani and Moyar rivers, located to the south and north of the Nilgiri massif. Because the two rivers have such straight courses, they may perhaps be flowing along fault lines from which the southern and northern Nilgiri slopes have been eroded back. A portion of the Moyar River flows through a gorge, and the Moyar is also associated with a broader valley eroded into the Mysore Plateau. The broader valley now separating the Nilgiri massif from the Mysore Plateau to the north is called the Mysore Ditch.

The Wynaad Plateau, which spreads northwestward from the high Nilgiris, is an extension of the intermontane Mysore Plateau. Outer slopes of the Wynaad Plateau are steep, and Charnockitic mountains (Camel's Hump, for example) rising to elevations above 7,000 feet form Western Ghats ranges running along the Plateau's edge. With the exception of scattered peaks and ranges, rolling hills less than 500 feet high cover much of the Plateau. Its surface lies below 4,000 feet and decreases in elevation toward the north and east. Lower